

S E C R E T

Not covered

SOVIET MILITARY READINESS

You may want to inform SECNAV as a courtesy that at SECDEF's request we are doing a study of naval readiness as the first of a series of studies on Soviet military readiness.

I recommend that you not raise the matter now since it may raise unjustified bureaucratic fears for you to make a specific point of mentioning it.

For your information, we are working on an outline and are trying to find a suitable analyst to head the study. [redacted] reaction from 25X1A initial meetings on this is that this will be a rewarding study.

Some backup material follows.

S E C R E T

TOP SECRET

11 AUG 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Strategic Research
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Soviet Naval Readiness
REFERENCES: Memo from D/OSR, dtd 26 July 1978 (DUL-0005-78(C),
same subject; "Soviet Military Readiness,"
March 1978, [redacted])

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1. With reference to the SecDef's desire that we take the lead on a study about Soviet naval readiness procedures and your memo on that subject of 26 July, I think we need to look at this problem in a slightly different light. I've read your pamphlet on Soviet military readiness. It is an excellent rundown on what quantity of Soviet forces is likely to be ready at given periods of alert and why. What I believe interests the SecDef, however, is how the Soviets go about maintaining the readiness capability of their various units, taking the navy as a first example. Clearly, they operate at sea less than we. Does this mean then that if they go to sea in an emergency they will be less prepared? Does this mean that if they expect war to come they are counting on several weeks to train their crews and check out their equipments?

2. For instance, in the Mediterranean even when they are deployed we note that the Soviet fleet spends a higher percentage of its time at anchor or in port than does ours (I believe). Under these conditions, would they be as ready from both a materiel and a personnel point of view to hit the target on the first shot as we are? What the SecDef and I are both interested in is in part whether the Soviets have some better way of maintaining materiel and personnel readiness with less exercise opportunity and expense.

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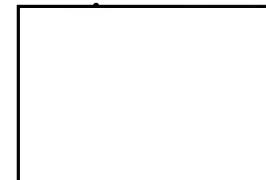
3. Beyond this, when the SecDef asked us to get into a military issue like this as the lead agent, I think we ought to be very interested in taking him up on his request. There are lots of ways we don't get invited into the military scene. Clearly, if we prove our value when we are needed and wanted, we'll get better access in the long run.

4. I'd appreciate your rethinking this issue.



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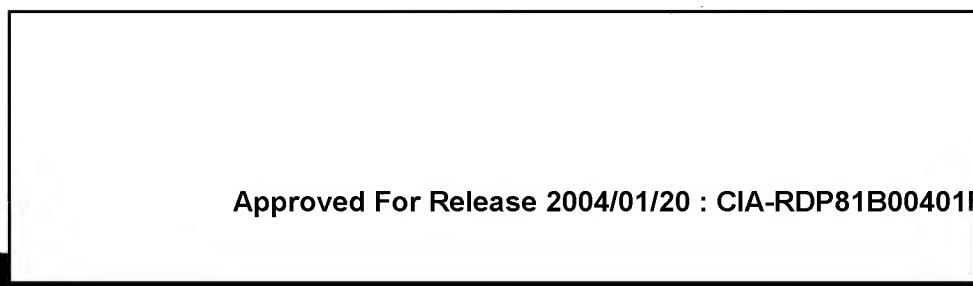
STANSFIELD TURNER



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cc: Acting NIO/CF

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Acting National Intelligence Officer
for Conventional Forces
27 July 1978

Response to Secretary Brown on Measures of
Soviet Naval Readiness

1. In response to Secretary Brown's concern about how we measure the readiness of the Soviet Navy, I asked the Director, OSR, to prepare a memorandum indicating:

- current Intelligence Community judgments
- availability of recent information
- recent publications
- suggestions on how NFAC might take the lead in this area.

His response is attached, together with copies of publications on this subject issued since

2. From the OSR memorandum, it is clear that Soviet naval readiness has had and retains a high priority in NFAC's program of research and analysis. It is covered in NIE 11-14-78, and work currently underway in OSR on SSBN readiness will be published by year's end. As noted in the memorandum, however, current estimates reflect the availability of Soviet naval forces for sea duty rather than their ability to perform combat operations. This obtains because predominant sources of information deal with the ability of Soviet ships to put to sea.

3. The Director, OSR, has outlined two studies that might be undertaken using available information: one, a qualitative survey of materiel readiness; the other, a statistical study of submarine and surface ship availability. He recommends against undertaking either of

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these studies at this time, however, because of the questionable validity of the results and the heavy commitment of his analytical assets to NIEs. I concur in this recommendation for those and the following reasons. The information currently available is sufficient to make reasoned judgments regarding Soviet naval readiness. The Intelligence Community is in general agreement on this issue, and additional analysis is unlikely to change present judgments. Further detailed analysis of the kind described by OSR appears warranted only if additional information were available for processing.

4. NFAC and the Intelligence Community appear to be on top of this issue insofar as the data available permit. The information exchange with the Navy is excellent, channels of communication are open and functioning. Andy Marshall and his staff were briefed by OSR a year ago. Based on the foregoing, and inasmuch as this does not appear to be a contentious intelligence issue, I recommend against initiating a Community effort on this subject at this time. I would recommend, however, that I contact the Navy and Marshall on your behalf and offer to provide NFAC consultation on whatever studies they have underway, and that I discuss with Gen. Camm the needs of the Intelligence Community for additional collection on this subject. I would also recommend that you make the attached memorandum from the Director, OSR, available to Secretary Brown in response to his general interest in how we deal with the question of Soviet naval readiness.

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